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In this August 7, 1803 letter to John Dickinson, Thomas Jefferson explains why he purchased the Louisiana Territory from Napoleon of France without constitutional authority.

...[T]here is a difficulty in this acquisition which presents a handle to the malcontents among us.

Our confederation is certainly confined to the limits established by the Constitution. The general government has no powers by such as the Constitution has given it, and it has not given it a power of holding foreign territory, and still less of incorporating it into the Union. An amendment of the Constitution seems necessary for this. In the meantime we must ratify and pay our money. . . for a thing beyond the Constitution, and rely on the nation to sanction [approve] an act done for its great good, without its previous authority.